

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 CU-02 /075 W
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2999

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 382

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, CI

SUBJECT: CURRENT POSITION OF THE "DINAMICOS"

1. SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH PRESIDENTS OF THREE "DINAMICO" TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS JANUARY 11 AND DISCUSSED THE FUTURE OF THE CHILEAN DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. THE THREE LEADERS DESCRIBED WHAT THEY TERMED A CONCERTED EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE GOC TO REMOVE THE REMAINING INDEPENDENT AND DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION LEADERS. WE BELIEVE THAT THE JUNTA MAY FEEL THAT BY TAKING PIECEMEAL ACTION AGAINST LABOR CRITICS IT CAN HOLD OUTSIDE REACTION TO MANAGEABLE LEVELS AND GRADUALLY CONSOLIDATE FULL CONTROL OVER CHILEAN TRADE UNIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH EDUARDO RIOS, PRESIDENT OF THE MARITIME CONFEDERATION (COMACH), ERNESTO VOGEL, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF RAILWAY WORKERS (FIFCH) AND TUCAPEL JIMENEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (ANEF) JANUARY 11, AT THEIR REQUEST.

3. ERNESTO VOGEL EXPLAINED THAT THEIR CALL WAS NOT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT BEING VICTIMIZED. RATHER THEY WISHED TO ALERT THE AMBASSADOR TO IMPENDING GOC ACTIONS SINCE ONCE THE JUNTA TOOK A DECISION IT WOULD NOT REVERSE ITSELF. VOGEL SAID THAT THE GOC WANTS TO REMOVE OR DISCREDIT THE "DINAMICOS" IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE FULL CONTROL
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OVER THE CHILEAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. HE HIMSELF WAS UNDER PRESSURE TO RETIRE BUT HAD DECIDED TO REMAIN AS PRESIDENT IN HIS OWN UNION, AT FINANCIAL SACRIFICE, UNTIL A NEW PRESIDENT COULD BE ELECTED.

4. TUCAPEL JIMENEZ SAID THAT THE RECENT RAID ON THE ANEF HEADQUARTERS WAS ORGANIZED BY THE DINA (SANTIAGO 0278). WHEN THE AMBASSADOR ASKED FOR PROOF, JIMENEZ RESPONDED THAT AS RECENTLY

AS DECEMBER 30, 1976 THE DINA HAD TRIED TO PIN HIM ON A CRIMINAL CHARGE. (IT SET UP A PUBLIC CONFESSION OF AN EMPLOYEE IN HIS DEPARTMENT ACCUSED OF TAKING A BRIBE IN THE UNREALIZED HOPE THAT THE EMPLOYEE WOULD IMPLICATE JIMENEZ.) SIMILARLY, HE SAID, THE RAIDERS OF THE ANEF HEADQUARTERS HOPED TO FIND A CLANDESTINE PRINTING PRESS OR SUBVERSIVE MATERIALS. JIMENEZ ACKNOWLEDGED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE BREAK-IN COULD HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED BY ANOTHER TRADE UNION BUT INSISTED THAT THE EVIDENCE POINTED TO THE DINA.

5. EDUARDO RIOS, RECOGNIZED LEADER OF THE "DINAMICOS," SAID THAT 1977 WOULD BE A TOUGH YEAR FOR LABOR AND PARTICULARLY FOR HIM. HE PRESENTED THE AMBASSADOR DOCUMENTS RELATING TO HIS POSSIBLE REMOVAL AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF PORT WORKERS (FEBACH) (SANTIAGO 0219). RIOS STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT SEVERAL MONTHS PLANNING A MEANS OF REMOVING HIM WITHOUT RESORT TO HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE TACTICS USED IN THE SANTANA CASE (SANTIAGO 8819). THE PLANS INCLUDED THE PARTICIPATION OF TOP LEVEL OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, THE DIRECT INTERVENTION OF THE LOCAL MILITARY GOVERNOR AND AN OVERT OFFER OF INCREASED BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL UNION. RIOS NOTED THAT THE JUNTA WAS SCHEMING TO DISAFFILIATE ANOTHER OF HIS UNIONS IN ORDER TO CAUSE SO MUCH CONFUSION WITHIN THE FEDERATION THAT IT WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN REPLACING THE ENTIRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FEBACH.

6. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE SYMPATHIZED WITH THEIR SITUATION AND WISHED TO BE KEPT FULLY AND PROMPTLY INFORMED ABOUT ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS. HE PROMISED TO REPORT THEIR CONCERNS FULLY TO THE DEPARTMENT AND ASK IT TO PASS THEM ON TO THE AFL-CIO.
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7. COMMENT: THE THREE LEADERS PRESENTED A BLEAK PICTURE OF THEIR FUTURE AND OF THE FUTURE OF THE MORE DEMOCRATIC AND INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS IN CHILE. IF THEIR ANALYSIS IS CORRECT, AND WE BELIEVE IT PROBABLY IS, WE ARE LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE JUNTA MAY FEEL THAT BY TAKING PIECEMEAL ACTION AGAINST ITS LABOR CRITICS ONE BY ONE IT CAN HOLD OUTSIDE REACTION TO MANAGEABLE LEVELS AND GRADUALLY CONSOLIDATE ITS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THE CHILEAN TRADE UNIONS.

8. WHILE WE HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR TO GOC OFFICIALS OUR GENERAL SUPPORT FOR FREE TRADE UNION PRACTICES IN CHILE AND ELSEWHERE,

WE HAVE NEVER EXPLICITLY CONFRONTED THE ISSUE NOW PUT UP TO US BY THE BELEAGUERED "DINAMICO" LEADERS. THE TIME HAS ARRIVED TO DETERMINE WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WE WILL DO TO ASSIST THEM.

9. AS A FIRST STEP, WE SUGGEST THAT AFL-CIO BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE ON THE RECENT HARASSMENT OF THE "DINAMICOS" AS WE HAVE REPORTED

IT. IF THE AFL-CIO REACTION IS STRONG, AND IF IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT A CRACKDOWN ON THE "DINAMICOS" WILL RESULT IN A PUBLIC OUTCRY IN THE UNITED STATES, IT WOULD BE LEGITIMATE FOR US TO MAKE THIS POINT DISCREETLY AND INFORMALLY TO THE GOC LABOR MINISTRY. IF THE GOC SHOULD NEVERTHELESS PERSIST, THE RESULT WOULD BE THE EXTINGUISHMENT OF ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING INDEPENDENT SOCIAL FORCES IN CHIL -- SOMETHING THE US WOULD HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS.

10. ADDITIONAL DETAILS IN MEMCON.
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